



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Report Released on Curbing Prescription Drug Abuse in Medicaid

Washington, DC – Today, the National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMD) released *State Medicaid Interventions for Preventing Prescription Drug Abuse and Overdose*, which details pathways for the nation's Medicaid programs to turn the tide of prescription drug abuse. This epidemic now claims more lives annually than heroin and cocaine combined.

The report can be found at <http://medicaiddirectors.org/node/1071>.

"The seriousness of prescription drug abuse for Medicaid beneficiaries in Tennessee and across the nation cannot be overstated," said Darin Gordon, NAMD President and Director of the Tennessee Medicaid Program. "This report will support Medicaid Directors in marshaling their resources and equipping their agencies with the tools they need to combat misuse of prescription drugs."

In recognition of Medicaid's important role, NAMD—with the support of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—commissioned a report on how Medicaid can act to reduce the impact of this problem on our health care systems, patients and communities. The report was developed by Mercer Health & Benefits, LLC and provides recommendations in six areas, including ways to leverage existing Medicaid infrastructure, proactive prevention, monitoring and surveillance, addiction treatment, cross-agency collaboration, and inter-state collaboration.

"Medicaid enrollees are at six times the risk for a prescription drug overdose compared with other patients, and make up over 45 percent of fatal overdoses. Now is the time for action," said Matt Salo, NAMD Executive Director. "NAMD is working with our members and other partners to find effective solutions in Medicaid."

The report illustrates several approaches Medicaid programs can take to combat prescription drug abuse. However, the scope of this epidemic extends beyond Medicaid alone. Active partnerships between Medicaid and federal agencies, law enforcement agencies, drug manufacturers, providers and pharmacists, and Medicaid enrollees are key to building effective solutions and saving lives.



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The National Association for Medicaid Directors (NAMD) is a bipartisan, professional, nonprofit organization of representatives of state Medicaid agencies (including the District of Columbia and the territories). NAMD provides a focused, coordinated voice for the Medicaid program in national policy discussion and to effectively meet the needs of its member states now and in the future. Visit us at www.medicaidirectors.org.